HOW FAMOUS MARATHON RACE ORIGINATED FROM BATTLE VICTORY

SOLDIER GAVE HIS MESSAGE AND DIED

First Race Was Run Over Route Taken By Messenger

HIS HEART BURST FROM TERRIFIC STRAIN

First Races and Men Who Ran Them —What Physicians Say of Training of Athletes

"Victory!" gasped the young soldier from Marathon as he tottered into Athens, then he died.

His overwrought nerves burst literally burst. He had volunteered to run the eight miles from the battlefield of Marathon to Athens with the news that the Greeks in far less force had beaten the horde of invading Persians and had driven them back to their ships with great slaughter.

And that is why we have the twentieth century Marathon, a relic of the classic days of so long, long ago. Today, when the Marathon craze with its big shoulder once has caught the whole country, we are lacking but one year of being 2,400 years after the first great Marathon run which cost the runner his life.

Marathon was a plain on the northeast coast of Attica, upon which lay four villages, smiled upon by the southern sun — Marathon, Probalinthus, Oinoe and Tricorythus. They formed a tetrapolis, or city made up of four towns. It was divided from the plain of Athens by Mount Pentelicus and the hilly district of Diacria.

At first this tetrapolis governed itself, but afterward it joined the Athenian State, though it retained much of its original distinctive character. There Apollo was first worshipped, and thence this worship was carried to Athens, when the tetrapolis became part of the great Athenian state. Here, too, Hercules was first set up as a god. The Heraclidae, descendants of Hercules, had their inception here, and here sprang up the legend of the self-sacrifice of Macaria, the daughter of Hercules. And on the plain of the tetrapolis the hero Theseus slew the Marathonian bull.

But greatest of all, the plain of Marathon derives its chief fame from the great battle of Marathon — maker of history — when an army of 10,000 Athenians and 1,000 Plataeans utterly routed a horde of 100,000 Persians. The great Greek soldier, Miltiades, commanded the little force from Athens; Datis and Artaphernes led the Persian host. Artaphernes was the nephew of King Darius of Persia, who had sent this mighty force to conquer all Greece and make it tributary to him.

It was a bitter struggle. Some of the Greek tribes were even willing to welcome the invading Persians, but not the Athenians, in whose beautiful capital was cherished all that was best in Greece. To lose meant to go under the yoke of the Persian King.

But Miltiades triumphed with a force only a tenth as great. He drove off the arrogant Persians to their ships, they leaving 6,100 dead upon the field. Miltiades buried 192 of his men on the field, and afterward the grateful Greeks erected a vast tumulus to their honor.

The city of Athens awaited the outcome of the expected battle, almost hopeless. Were they to lose their all and be vassals of a barbarian, or were they to continue free and true, able to preserve their classic ideals?

And Miltiades knew all this. He knew they needed the news. He knew, too, that a man can run for twenty-six miles faster than a horse can run.

"Who will take the news of the victory to Athens?" he cried.

"I will," said a youthful soldier, stepping from the ranks.

But this was not a sawdust track or macadamized road over which the bearer of the glad tidings had to run. It was up hill and down dale, over sand and rock, through mud and water. On, on, on he ran, nearly naked, striving to get there at the earliest moment with his glad tidings.

All Athens was awaiting news from the front. At length, far down the road, the guards on the outskirts of the city saw a tottering figure slowly running down the road that led from the plains of Marathon.

"What is he, what news did he bring?" Slowly the young man dragged himself into the great plain where the Athenians were wont to meet. He gasped out his message of victory and died. He had run 26 miles and 385 yards, which today has become the classic Marathon distance.

The best historians say that this young hero, who not only fought in the battle, but ran from Marathon to Athens afterward, was Pheidippides. Herodotus, "Father of History," does not mention his name, however.

But today the government of Greece accords him as the hero. So in 1896 the historic course was rerun for the first time from Marathon to the great stadium in Athens erected on the site of that other stadium of olden days, now crumbled to dust through the lapse of the centuries.

And why was it possible in those ancient days for men to run so far and fast? And women, too? Because of centuries of training. Pheidippides had been an athlete even before he was a soldier. He came from a family of athletes, undoubtedly. No doubt his mother, as a girl, had been a runner, too.

In those olden days women and girls, as well as boys and men, entered the athletic games. It was nothing against a woman's modesty to take part in running and jumping against those of her own sex. Some of the greatest of Greek statues and friezes that have survived to our day show women and girls in athletic contests. And men looked on.

And how did they train for these sublime events in their lives? Primarily, they led the simple life. A regular diet was prescribed for those who wanted to excel in athletics. The Greek athlet eschewed wine and drank nothing but warm water. He ate new cheese, boiled grain and dried figs. Meat was not allowable.

Of such people came the runner of the original Marathon, who gave his life to do the distance without pausing for a rest. No doubt, too, the Marathon hero had taken a part in the sacred Olympian games, or else he could never have made the run after fighting all day in battle.

Every few years, accordingly as the moon, which marked the Greek midsummer, drew to its full, a pilgrimage of all that was best and vigorous in Hellas — ancient Greece — ended at the little plain of Olympia, in Elis, the small state on the Western coast of Peloponnesus, a flat space with natural barriers of the mountains and river, some fifteen miles from the sea.

Long before the beginning of the festival heralds went forth throughout Greece to proclaim a truce, during which all fighting must cease between city and state and between state and state. A whole month of peace was proclaimed so that the Hellenic youth should be able to travel unmolested from the uttermost boundaries of Hellas in order to make the offering of their piety and their vigor to the Olympian Zeus at Elis.

The plain of Olympia was sacred ground. It was dedicated to Zeus—or Jupiter —their god of gods, and contained on its northernmost side the altis, or sanctum. In this sanctum was the temple of Zeus and the temple of Hera. There were altars to Aphrodite, or Venus, and to Demeter. This sanctum was adorned by some of the most beautiful examples of Grecian art, including the exquisite statue of Zeus by the great Greek sculptor Phidias.

But there were no more Marathons in those days. Never again was that historic race run until 1896, when, at the new Olympic games, the Greek Government instituted the Marathon race. The start was on the plain of Marathon, the finish in the great new stadium built in Athens.

The runners, lightly clad, started off with their attendants on bicycles, with Greek officers on horseback guarding their journey. Physicians were stationed along the route to give aid if necessary.

At Pikermi, the Frenchman Lemursiaux was leading, followed by the Australian, Flack; Blake, the American, the Hungarian, Keineso, and then the Greek runners, the first of whom was Laurentis.

In passing Pikermi Loues, a Greek from Maroussi, took a glass of wine and asked information about those ahead of him. He learned that Blake, the American, had stopped. At Karvati Lemursiaux was still leading and Flack was second. The peasants had prepared a crown to be placed on the head of the leader there—it went to the Frenchman and was placed on his head.

Next came the climb up the long hill—the hill that Pheidippides had run up so many centuries before. The Parisian — Lemursiaux — was very tired then, and Flack, the Australian, passed him. Meanwhile the Greek, Loues, was drawing up slowly. Following him was a crowd from his little village — almost a guard of honor. Laurentis was out of it.

Then the Frenchman staggered and fell. He was carried away. Next Loues, the Greek, passed Flack, the Australian. Then Flack collapsed and was carried away unconscious. Loues was in the lead.

In the stadium at Athens a great company was gathered. The spectators were anxiously awaiting the first arrival from Marathon. Suddenly a cannon was fired. All eyes were fixed on the entrance. Then a form slowly ran into the arena. It was Loues, sunburned and covered with dust, but still game.

The Crown Prince of Greece and Prince George jumped from their boxes to greet him. Taking places by his side they ran with him, one on the right, the other on the left. Loues breasted the tape gallantly and walked over to the royal box where the King of Greece sat. He bowed and the King took off his yachting cap and waved it enthusiastically.

And then Loues went away to rest. He was fatigued, but not exhausted. He had done the historic Marathon course in 2 hours, 53 minutes and 20 seconds, the first record.

Loues' time was a record for this reason:

No record had been kept of Pheidippides' time when he ran with his message from Marathon, and in 1896 the first test was really made of men and time. Ten years later there was another Marathon at the Olympic games at Athens with fifty-three entries. But this time the first Greek to finish was fifth.

W. J. Sherring, a Canadian, won. As he entered the stadium he was met by Prince George, who ran with him the entire length of the stadium. Almost all of the 80,000 people within the stadium were Greek sympathizers, but they took their cue from the sportsmanlike conduct of their Prince and cheered Sherring heartily. Queen Olga sent Sherring a bouquet, and he was showered with roses as he went through the marble arch leading to the dressing rooms.

But, best of all, Sherring clipped nearly seven minutes from the record. His time was 2 hours, 51 minutes, 23 3-5 seconds. The second man beat the time of the winner of ten years before.

And let some of those people who run Marathons in this country over sawdust tracks or around baseball fields realize the difference. The real Marathon course is on the high road from Marathon to Athens, and is steep and hilly until within two miles of Athens. It is the hardest course for the distance which athletes ever have essayed.

Then came the great London Marathon of last year, which little Johnny Hayes, of New York, managed to win, after Dorando, the great Italian runner, collapsed 440 yards from the finish. The race was started on the east lawn of Windsor Castle and finished at the stadium in Shepherd's Bush, London. Hayes made the regulation distance in 2 hours, 55 minutes and 18 2-5 seconds.

Since then we have had nothing but Marathons in this great country of ours, which really covers quite a few more acres than Greece. At the polo grounds, New York, St. Ives, the Frenchman, laid down a new record of 2 hours, 40 minutes, 50 2-5 seconds, beating such veteran Marathon men as Dorando, Hayes, Shrubo, Maloney and Longboat. The four men who finished all beat the original Marathon record, but they ran on a turf track and not up hill and down dale. It was no such course as poor Pheidippides had to run.

And now comes the question:

Who is fit to run a Marathon?

The first answer is — no person under eighteen years of age, and really he ought to be older than that. Few realize the strain on the heart. The boy who tackles a Marathon today will feel its ill effects twenty years from now in his heart action. There must be strict training, plenty of good food, plenty of sleep, no intoxicants and careful attention to details. Luck never won a Marathon — any trainer will tell the novice that axiom.

Read what the doctors and the athletes say:

"Sometimes the aortic valve gives way," said Dr. James Gwathmay, of the Polyclinic Hospital, New York City, "or else the heart becomes enlarged. But it must be remembered that all athletes have enlarged hearts, the result of the exceptional work they have to do. This is not unusual. Do not all the other muscles increase in size as the result of exercise, and are we not glad to see them do so?"

And this from Paul Pilgrim, one of the world's greatest middle distance runners, an Olympic first place winner:

"I kno wof many men who have had to give up athletics and exercise," he says, "because of a heart weakened by too much athletics. Lieut. Sam Thomas, of the Seventh Regiment, New York, had to forego athletics because of a heart warning. Three years ago he held sprint, pole vault and broad jump records. Elmer Finlay, the New York athletic hurdler, has been ordered to break training by his physicians. Only a little while ago he held records galore.

"German physicians were making a study of the effects of a competition on the heart at the last set of Olympic games at Athens. Before and after every race they placed tissue paper over my chest and traced my heart on the paper."

"Hypertrophy of the heart," said Dr. Arthur L. Derchfield, of New York, captain of the New York University track team and a middle distance runner, "is the result of a continued excessive indulgence in athletics. It seems to me that the warning would be timely.

"Boys in the high school, college men, athletic club members, alternately train and race to the limit of their endurance for the period of a few months. Then they lay off and perhaps dissipate for the remainder of the year. The effect is a general enlargement of the heart or a general weakening of the system.

"In these strains, at first, the walls of the heart, especially of the left ventricle, become enlarged, and finally, if work is not stopped in time, the organ fails to do its work and ultimately collapses."

And that is what the Marathon race does. Pheidippides died for something worth while. But thousands of half-grown lads, striving to win a Marathon all physicians agree — are in danger of killing or crippling themselves for no reason at all except for a cup and a little one-day glory.

SHERIDAN SHEARING

(Continued from Page 9.)

Chief Steward Westaway has been eighteen years connected with the billet of steward, being on the Pacific Mail, the Oceanic Company, and with the transport service since it was originated. Tis said he is shortly to retire from the government, and open up a coal, wood and grocery business in Frisco, his old home, where he has a host of friends who know his ability in the commissiart line.

Cook John Barret, of the 7th Band is the biggest man on this trip of the Sheridan. He hails from Detroit, and last evening, in order to give the people of his home town a treat, he paid for a wireless message from the ship to Detroit, telling the home people all about the voyage.

Batt. Sergt.-Major George H. Barngrover, of the 7th finished today a 17 page letter to a friend in Detroit, and will mail same as soon as we reach Honolulu.

There is a nice library in the office of the transport q. m., Capt. Campbell E. Babcock, which is available to all passengers in first and second-class upon the payment of One Dollar for the trip. This money goes to pay the rental on the piano, the surplus being used to purchase more books.

THE GENTLE FERREIRA

Recarda Souza Ferreira tells nice tales concerning her husband in the libel for divorce filed in the Circuit Court. She says that he is in the habit of calling her vile names, staying out nights and returning home in the morning drunk; kicking and beating her. He appears to be a filthy sort of man, for she says he gave her vermin. He has ordered her out of the house and made her stay out; has taken her to his parents' home and made her eat food not suitable for her; has blacked her eye, and to cap the climax of all his cruelties, he had her committed to the insane asylum for two weeks although she was not insane. But if all she says of his treatment of her is true, it is a wonder she is not crazy by this time.